

MTB World Cup XC #6 & DH #5 - CDM

Maribor, Slovenia, September 14-16, 2007

September 15: Elite Men Cross Country - Kessiakoff wins his first World Cup

By Rob Jones in Maribor – cyclingnews.com

The final round of the cross-country World Cup was the first cross-country World Cup to be held in Maribor, Slovenia, so it was only fitting that a first-time winner took the top step of the podium as Fredrik Kessiakoff (Cannondale-Vredestein) became the first Swede to win a World Cup. There were no surprises in the overall standings, with recently crowned world champions Irina Kalentyeva (Topeak-Ergon) and Julien Absalon (Orbea) winning the overall titles.

Cannondale-Vredestein took firm control of the race from the start, with team mates Roel Paulissen, Jakob Fuglsang, Kessiakoff and Kashi Leuchs all at the front on the first descent. They were joined by Christoph Sauser (Specialized), Manuel Fumic (Fumic Brothers Racing), Jose Hermida (Multivan-Merida) and Geoff Kabush (Maxxis). Kabush was still feeling the effects of an arm injury two weeks earlier, and faded as the race went on (finishing 45th), but the others proved to be the main race animators.



Fredrik Kessiakoff (Cannondale-Vredestein)
Photo ©: Rob Jones

The one name missing was that of world champion and already World Cup champion Julien Absalon. Absalon admitted to having little motivation for the race, saying: "I did it just for fun today. I had a really bad start, and it is hard to fight back when you have no goal in the race. In the middle I caught up to my team mate Inaki Lejarreta, who is fighting for a Spanish Olympic selection, so my goal became to work for him during the race."

Absalon patiently worked for Lejarreta all race, moving him up to 17th and then holding back at the line to let the Spaniard cross first.



Christoph Sauser (Specialized)
Photo ©: Rob Jones

Back at the front, the race was down to three riders by the start of lap two - Kessiakoff, Sauser and Hermida. The Swede attacked halfway up the climb, splitting the group, with Hermida immediately giving chase and Sauser deciding to play a waiting game.

"They were both too fast, and it was too early," commented Sauser. "I know Freddy blows when he goes out so hard, so I was waiting for weakness there. But this time he didn't. I caught Jose (on lap five), but Freddy was out of reach."

Manuel Fumic also caught a tiring Hermida with a lap to go, to take third, with Paulissen rounding out the top-five. Adam Craig (Giant), after his patented slow start, moved up steadily through the field to finish 12th, the top North American result. "I finally got going halfway through the race," said Craig. "Once it opened up I could pass, and catch riders on the tricky bits. I haven't been feeling super tip-top, so I'll take this result."

Kessiakoff was ecstatic with his win; riding much of the last lap with a grin on his face after the gap to Sauser went over a minute and his win seemed assured. "Finally! I've been waiting for this one for a long time," he exclaimed. "I just decided to give it everything; why hold back? It is the last important race of the season, so it was do or die for me."



Road professional Gilberto Simoni (Saunier Duval-Prodier)
Photo ©: Rob Jones

Hermida took second in the final overall standings behind Absalon, with Sauser third, Paulissen fourth and Kessiakoff moving into fifth.

Race Notes

- Despite the team announcing that he would ride a full suspension bike in a World Cup for the first time, Julien Absalon ended up sticking to his usual hard tail. "I am more comfortable with it," he explained. "Maybe this winter I will spend some time testing a full suspension bike."

Results

1	Fredrik Kessiakoff (Swe) Cannondale-Vredestein	1.53.44
2	Christoph Sauser (Swi) Specialized	1.25
3	Manuel Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International	1.41
4	Jose Antonio Hermida Ramos (Esp) Multivan Merida Biking Team	2.01
5	Roel Paulissen (Bel) Cannondale-Vredestein	2.48
6	Jean-Christophe Peraud (Fra) Orbea	3.22
7	Lado Fumic (Ger) Fumic.Brothers.International	3.37
8	Jakob Fuglsang (Den) Cannondale-Vredestein	3.52
9	Kashi Leuchs (NZl) Cannondale-Vredestein	4.38
10	Filip Meirhaeghe (Bel) Versluys-Landbouwkrediet	4.45
11	Moritz Milatz (Ger) Multivan Merida Biking Team	
12	Adam Craig (USA) Giant Mountain Bike Team	4.54
13	Carlos Coloma Nicolas (Esp) Spiuk-Tau Ceramica	5.17
14	Cedric Ravanel (Fra) Team Lapierre International	5.26
15	Christoph Soukup (Aut)	5.57
16	Wolfram Kurschat (Ger)	6.08
17	Inaki Lejarreta Errasti (Esp) Orbea	6.33
18	Julien Absalon (Fra) Orbea	6.34
19	Ralph Naef (Swi) Multivan Merida Biking Team	7.04
20	Milan Spesny (Cze) Merida Biking Team	7.24
21	Jeremy Horgan-Kobelski (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher	7.27
22	Jorg Graf (Swi)	7.34
23	Peter Riis Andersen (Den) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbike	7.37
24	Jeremiah Bishop (USA) Trek-VW	7.55
25	Hannes Metzler (Aut)	8.14
26	Martin Gujan (Swi)	8.24
27	Marti Gispert Labarta (Esp) Spiuk-Tau Ceramica	8.30
28	Oliver Beckingsale (GBr)	8.39
29	Ivan Alvarez Gutierrez (Esp) ASD KTM International Team	8.53
30	Karl Platt (Ger) Team Bulls	9.17
31	Dariusz Batek (Pol) Halls Professional Mtb Team	9.42
32	Rudi Van Houts (Ned) Dolphin Bike Team	9.54
33	Alban Lakata (Aut) Trek-VW	9.59
34	Stefan Sahm (Ger) Team Bulls	10.00
35	Liam Killeen (GBr) Specialized	10.02
36	Seamus Mcgrath (Can) Rocky Mountain Haywood	10.14
37	Gion Manetsch (Swi)	10.48
38	Thomas Frischknecht (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team	10.53
39	Lukas Fluckiger (Swi)	10.54
40	Jochen Kass (Ger) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbike	
41	Marek Galinski (Pol)	10.58
42	Ruben Ruzafa Cueto (Esp) Orbea	11.12
43	Jiri Friedl (Cze) Merida Biking Team	11.33
44	Todd Wells (USA)	11.38
45	Geoff Kabush (Can)	12.03
46	Daniel Mcconnell (Aus)	12.29
47	Bart Brentjens (Ned) Dolphin Bike Team	12.39
48	Robert Gehbauer (Aut) Multivan Merida Biking Team	
49	Pierre Geoffroy Plantet (Fra) Team Lapierre International	12.40
50	Silvio Bundi (Swi)	12.42
51	Bjorn Brems (Bel) Dolphin Bike Team	12.43
52	Andreas Kugler (Swi) Fischer-BMC	12.48
53	Sergy Kysenko (Ukr)	13.18
54	Christof Bischof (Swi) Bikin'cyprus Int'l Mtb Team	13.56
55	Mathieu Toulouse (Can)	14.19
56	Klaus Nielsen (Den) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbike	14.46
57	Balz Weber (Swi) Bikepark.Ch Tui	14.51
58	Vaclav Hlavac (Cze)	14.57
59	Giuseppe Lamastra (Ita)	15.02
60	Yader Zoli (Ita) ASD KTM International Team	
61	Robin Seymour (Irl) Dolphin Bike Team	15.12
62	Michael Broderick (USA)	15.30
63	Tim Wijnants (Bel) ASD KTM International Team	15.57
64	Magnus Darvell (Swe) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbike	16.10
65	Ruud Rentmeester (Ned)	16.19

66 Niall Davis (Irl)	16.27
67 Andrea Tiberi (Ita)	16.50
68 Tim Bohme (Ger)	17.11
69 Filip Eberl (Cze)	17.13
70 St e phane Tempier (Fra) Gewiss Bianchi	17.30
71 Matous Ulman (Cze)	17.41
72 Lachlan Norris (Aus)	18.54
73 Andras Parti (Hun)	19.15

One lap behind

74 Kris Sneddon (Can) Kona Les Gets
75 Sid Taberlay (Aus) Dolphin Bike Team
76 Max Oste Macdonald (Swe)
77 Roland Plank (Aut)
78 Max Plaxton (Can) Rocky Mountain Haywood
79 Lee Williams (GBr)
80 Olaf Rochow (Ger)
81 Oleksanar Yakymenko (Ukr)
82 Gilberto Simoni (Ita)
83 Ricky Federau (Can)
84 Uwe Hochenwarter (Aut)
85 Luka Mezgec (Slo)
86 Jan Skarnitzl (Cze)
87 Ian Bibby (GBr)
88 Ian Wilkinson (GBr)
89 Marcus Roy (NZl)
90 Steffen Thum (Ger) Team Mayer Stevens
91 Luka Homovec (Slo)
92 Robert Kircher (Aut)
93 Samuel Schultz (USA) Subaru-Gary Fisher
94 Marco Aurelio Fontana (Ita)
95 Evguen Petchenine (Rus) Format-Udmurtia
96 Umberto Corti (Ita)

Two laps behind

97 Jakob Nimpf (Aut)
98 Robert Mennen (Ger)
99 Anze Bizjak (Slo)
100 Luka Rakusa (Slo)
101 Borut Fonda (Slo)
102 Mitja Tancik (Slo)
103 Szilard Buruczki (Hun)
104 Anddry Gumenyuk (Ukr)
105 Kristian Hynek (Cze)
106 Wilko Rochow (Ger)
107 Alexey Belokrylov (Rus) Format-Udmurtia
108 Zsolt Szlobodnyik (Hun)
109 Vero L u scher (Ger)
110 Jaka Tancik (Slo)

Three laps behind

111 Marios Athanasiades (Cyp) Bikin'cyprus Int'l Mtb Team
112 Florian Vogel (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team
113 Jernej Muzga (Slo)
114 Samo Rauter (Slo)
115 Dani Simcic (Cro)
116 David Vogrin (Slo)

Four laps behind

117 Chris Jongewaard (Aus) Dolphin Bike Team
DSQ Matthias Fl u ckiger (Swi)
DNF Nino Schurter (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team
DNF Bas Peters (Ned)

DNF Jaroslav Kulhavy (Cze)
DNF Torsten Marx (Ger) Team Alb-Gold Mountainbike
DNF Emil Lindgren (Swe) Gewiss Bianchi
DNF Till Marx (Swi) Swisspower MTB Team
DNF Tony Longo (Ita)
DNF Cristobal Silva (Chi)
DNF Marc Colom (Fra)
DNF Conner Mcconvey (Irl)
DNF Andras Melts (Hun)
DNF Carl Decker (USA) Giant Mountain Bike Team
DNF Gerald Hauer (Aut)